

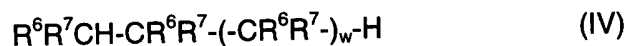
IN THE CLAIMS

Kindly amend the claims to read as follows.

1. (cancelled).

2. (currently amended): A process composition according to claim 18, wherein component A is a sulfonate of the formula (I) where at least one of all the R^2 radicals present is $-SO_3^{\ominus}M^{\oplus}$.

3. (currently amended): A process composition according to claim 18, wherein component A is a sulfonate of the formula (IV)



where w is from 1 to 3, one of the R^6 radicals is an unsubstituted phenyl radical and all the other R^6 radicals are hydrogen, and one of the R^7 radicals is $-SO_3^{\ominus}M^{\oplus}$ and all the other R^7 radicals are hydrogen.

4. (currently amended): A process composition according to claim 18, wherein component A is sodium cumenesulfonate or potassium cumenesulfonate.

5. (currently amended): A process composition according to claim 18, wherein component A is a dihydric or trihydric alcohol of 4 to 8 carbon atoms.

6. (cancelled).

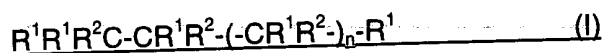
7. (currently amended): A process composition according to claim 18, wherein the composition includes, including per 100 parts by weight of water (component D), the following amounts of components A, B, C, E, F:

5 to 35 parts by weight of component A,
10 to 40 parts by weight of component B,
3 to 30 parts by weight of component C,
0 to 30 parts by weight of component E,

0 to 20 parts by weight of component F.

8. (currently amended): A process for the pretreatment of fiber materials in the form of textile sheets prior to manufacture of enduse articles from the sheets, which comprises treating the fiber materials with a composition ~~according to claim 1~~ including at least the components A, B, C and D.

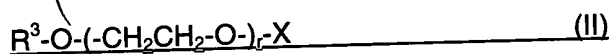
where component A is either a sulfonate of the formula (I)



where n is from 0 to 8, each R¹ is independently of the others hydrogen, an alkyl radical of 1 to 4 carbon atoms, an unsubstituted phenyl radical or a phenyl radical substituted by a radical of the formula -SO₃[⊖]M[⊕], and each R² is independently of the others R¹ or a radical of the formula -SO₃[⊖]M[⊕], subject to the proviso that component A contains at least one radical of the formula -SO₃[⊖]M[⊕] and M is Na, K or NH₄.

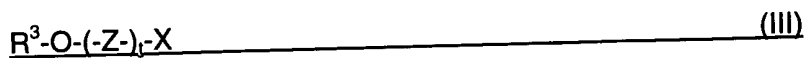
or where component A is a polyhydric aliphatic alcohol of 2 to 12 carbon atoms.

component B is an ethoxylated alcohol of the formula (II) or a mixture of such alcohols



where r is from 1 to 8.

component C is an alkoxylate of the formula (III) or a mixture of such alkoxylates



where t is from 4 to 30, 20 to 80% of all the Z groups present are -CH₂CH₂-O- and 80 to 20% of all the Z groups present are -CHR⁴-CHR⁵-O-, where in each case one of R⁴ and R⁵ is hydrogen and the other is CH₃, R³ in both component B and component C is a linear or branched alkyl radical of 4 to 20 carbon atoms and 50 to 100% of all the X's present are hydrogen and 0 to 50% of all the X's present are a methyl, ethyl or phenyl radical.

and component D is water.

and optionally also a component E and/or a component F,
component E being a magnesium salt or a calcium salt and component F being an alkali metal salt or
ammonium salt of a sulfuric monoester of the formula (V)



where R^8 is a linear or branched alkyl radical of 4 to 12 carbon atoms.

9. (original): A process according to claim 8, wherein the fiber materials are 70 to 100% by weight cotton.

10. (cancelled).

11. (original): A process according to claim 8, wherein the fiber materials are textile wovens or knits.

12. (new):): A process according to claim 8, which is carried out prior to a dyeing step.

13. (new): A process according to claim 8, wherein the composition includes, per 100 parts by weight of water (component D), the following amounts of components A, B, C, E, F:

- 10 to 25 parts by weight of component A,
- 15 to 35 parts by weight of component B,
- 5 to 25 parts by weight of component C,
- 2 to 20 parts by weight of component E, and
- 2 to 10 parts by weight of component F.

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-9 and 11 were pending in this application.

Claims 1-8 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stringer et al. (U.S. Patent 5,858,955).

Claims 9 and 11 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gosselink et al. (U.S. Patent 5,691,298) in view of Stringer et al.

Claims 1 and 6 have been presently cancelled.

Claims 2-5 and 7-8 have been amended and claims 12 and 13 have been added.

Claims 2-5, 7-9 and 11 are presented for reconsideration; claims 12 and 13 are presented for consideration.

REMARKS

The claims have been amended in accord with the OG Notice of January 31, 2003. Additions are shown by underlining and deletions are shown by strikethrough.

Since claims 1 and 6 have been presently cancelled and claims 12 and 13 have been added, the number of claims has not been increased.

In an earnest effort to advance prosecution, applicants have rewritten claim 8 in independent form, incorporating the limits of previously amended claim 1 and original claim 6 therein. Since claims 1 and 6 fail to further limit amended claim 8, they have been presently cancelled.

Additionally claim 8 recites "A process for the pretreatment of fiber materials *in the form of textile sheets prior to manufacture of enduse articles from the sheets ...*". See pages 1-2 of the disclosure, where it is clear that the pretreatment of the fiber materials is carried out while the fiber materials are in the form of textile sheets, as a preparation for subsequent manufacturing steps, such as dyeing